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DIPLOMATIC DEFENSE POLICIES AND COUNTER INSURGENCY OPERATIONS IN NORTH EASTERN NIGERIA, 2010-2024

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Abstract

The study examines diplomatic defense policies and counter insurgency operations in North-Eastern Nigeria. The general objective of the study is to examine diplomatic defense policies in ensuring effective counter insurgency operations in North Eastern Nigeria. The study employed mixed research design and data were generated using qualitative and quantitative that involves both primary and secondary sources. The study is guided by Counter insurgency theory. The study revealed that the diplomatic strategies used in securing external defense arrangements were desirable but less impactful due to not only external problem of trust but due to failure to internally address the root causes of terrorism in states. The study concluded that Nigeria has in spite of her diplomatic posturing still lack steam in the quest to fulfill her desire to end the intractable Boko Haram terrorism even when it has diplomatically committed itself to regional stabilization and other multilateral strategies to boost defense arrangements. The study recommended that Nigerian state must intentionally be seen to be addressing poverty, unemployment and porous borders which were among the key root causes of the domestic terrorism in Nigeria that has spiraled out of control into a regional issue, in order for the diplomatic strategies used to remain impactful.

Keywords: Diplomat, Diplomacy, Defense Diplomacy, Defense/Security, Defense Policy, Insurgency

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Introduction

The global landscape is fraught with threats to peace, security, and stability, with terrorism being a major concern (Mazer, Koldas & Aksit, 2020). Developing countries, in particular, face challenges in developing their defense industry due to limited resources, lack of capital, and dependence on foreign technology (Widyatmoko Almubaroq, & Saragih, 2022). In this context, defense diplomacy has emerged as a crucial instrument for nations to promote their national interests, protect their security, and foster cooperation with other countries. Nigeria, a country with a diverse ethnic composition and abundant natural resources, is no exception to these security challenges (Ojo, 2016). The country has faced numerous security threats, including terrorism, insurgency, and banditry, which have necessitated strategic partnerships with regional and global actors to enhance its security architecture and counterterrorism efforts (Suleiman & Omojuwa, 2025). The Boko Haram insurgency, in particular, has had far-reaching implications for Nigeria's national security and foreign policy. In response to these threats, Nigeria has increasingly resorted to defense diplomacy, leveraging its strategic partnerships with countries like the United States, the United Kingdom, Russia, and China to enhance its counterinsurgency efforts (Oyewole, 2017). Regional security cooperation through the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU) has also been critical to Nigeria's strategic response. However, these collaborations are not without challenges, including funding concerns, bureaucratic issues, and conflicting national interests (Makai, Fadola, & Sholademi, 2024).

The Nigerian government has also taken steps to revitalize its arms industry, with the supply of adequate human and material resources to defense production companies (DICON, 2016). However, the country's defense industry remains underdeveloped, and the country continues to rely heavily on imported military equipment (Ellmer, 2021). This underscores the need for Nigeria to develop its defense industry and leverage defense diplomacy to enhance its national security.Defense diplomacy has been instrumental for many countries, including Indonesia and India, in achieving their strategic interests and promoting their defense industry (Anwar, cited in Wulandari, Perwita, & Hadisancoko, 2025). These countries have used defense diplomacy to build strategic partnerships, transfer technology, and enhance their military capabilities. Nigeria can learn from these examples and develop its own defense diplomacy strategy to address its security challenges.

Oyewole (2017) further states that strategic defence agreements, joint military exercises, and information sharing with countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Russia and China have facilitated Nigeria’s counterinsurgency efforts. In addition to this, regional security cooperation through the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU) have been critical to Nigeria's strategic response.

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On the contrary, Makai, Fadola, and Sholademi (2024) assert that security collaborations in Nigeria generally encounter challenges that include funding concerns, bureaucratic issues, and the conflicting national interests of partners.

According to Ellmer (2021), Nigeria is the largest importer of military equipment in subSaharan Africa. This is the result of the Nigerian government's activities in addressing the threats raised by the Boko Haram (BH) and Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), militancy, and banditry in the northwestern region of the country (Ellmer, 2021). The Nigerian arms industry is being revitalized with the supply of adequate human and material resources to all DICON plants. This started since the inception of Air Vice Marshal Onyemaechi Osahor, Director General, Research and Development Bureau, and Maj. Gen. Victor Ezugwu, DG DICON, at the helm of the R&D efforts of DICON and the Nigerian forces. Arms-producing companies, also called defense contractors or military industries, produce arms mainly for the armed forces of a sovereign nation or other government agencies that are legally entitled to the possession and use of arms. Military products, such as guns, ammunition, missiles, military aircraft, vehicles, armored tanks, and gun boats, are traded (DICON, 2016).

Numerous issues are capable of having adversarial effects on Nigeria's external relations. Nigeria was at a time respected for its role in restoring peace to some countries that were prone to conflicts in Africa such as the role it played as a mediator in Congo in 1960, Chad in 1979, and Liberia in 1989, among others. It is an irony that Nigeria now needs the international community's aid to restore peace, security, and sovereignty over its territory. The interests and objectives of Boko Haram later became political which was to form an Islamic state, with the establishment of the Sharia Law system in Nigeria. To accomplish its goals, the sect fought with the Nigerian Police on numerous occasions in 2009. Increasingly, the group has developed to become a national, regional, and global concern (Enuka & Ojukwu, 2016).The study of Nigeria's defense diplomacy and counterinsurgency efforts is crucial in understanding the country's foreign policy objectives and national interests (Udeala, 2016). The findings of this study will contribute to the existing literature on defense diplomacy and provide insights into the challenges and opportunities facing Nigeria's defense industry.

It is against this background of the issues of Nigeria's foreign policy, with regards to the efforts to combat the threats of Boko Haram, assumes greater significance. The necessity to provide solutions to the security threats posed by the insurgency of Boko Haram, which has assumed international dimensions, motivates this study to focus on investigating diplomatic defense policies and counter insurgency operation in North Eastern Nigeria.

Statement of the Research Problem

A diverse array of threats, such as insurgencies, banditry, and communal violence, mark

Nigeria's security landscape, straining the country's stability and security infrastructure. These challenges transcend traditional warfare and require innovative approaches to ensure national safety (Calcara, Gilli, Gilli, Marchetti, & Zaccagnini 2022).

The rise of Boko Haram in northeastern Nigeria and the group's alignment with global jihadist movements, such as ISIS, presented a new dimension to U.S.-Nigeria relations as recognizing the threat Boko Haram posed not only to Nigeria but to regional stability, the U.S. increased its counterterrorism support through military training, intelligence sharing, and provision of equipment to the Nigerian Armed Forces (Alexander, 2020). Notably, under the Obama administration, the U.S. expanded security assistance to Nigeria, including the establishment of the U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) to oversee security efforts in Africa and increase counterterrorism initiatives in the region and also diplomatic visits, such as that of U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry in 2016, reinforced the importance of U.S.-Nigeria counterterrorism cooperation (Adeyeye, Adedire, & Lanre-Babalola, 2023). Statistics from Cascais (2019) confirmed that over ten years of Boko Haram attacks, around 32,000 people have been killed and millions displaced from their homes, a unique record among contemporary terrorist organizations. However, it is important to note that Boko Haram insurgency has transcended national boundaries as Assanvo, Ella, Abatan, and Sawadogo (2016) unveiled thus: Boko Haram insurgency originated in Nigeria's northeast but it has gradually spread to other parts of the country and to a large portion of the Lake Chad Basin (LCB). The scourge threatens not only Nigeria's territorial integrity but also regional stability and the security of millions of people. Hence, the concerned countries: Cameroon, Niger and Chad stepped up their military responses. These national initiatives then sparked off joint efforts that led to the establishment of the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) under the auspices of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC)...in order to end the scourge.

However, all these raise questions about the sustainability and efficiency of Nigeria's security partnerships, with critics arguing that dependence on foreign assistance breeds dependency and undermines the long-term autonomy of security (Meijer & Brooks, 2021). Others stress that "internal security governance improvement" and strengthening local institutions are necessary for optimizing benefits from strategic alliances (Okenyodo, 2016). In reality, Nigeria needs strategic partnerships for its security. The evolution of threats precedes the evolving approaches that a country should adopt in securing its sovereignty. The success of these alliances will lie in Nigeria's ability to negotiate equitable security arrangements, effectively leverage international cooperation, and strengthen its own security framework domestically. The problem is that despite these Strategic Partnerships and Nigeria's non- aligned posture, like India and Pakistan, she is still struggling with security challenges.

The U.S. government has also provided the Nigerian government with Intelligence,

Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) to aid Nigeria's efforts to locate the Boko Haram (Obama, 2014). In addition, the US has provided $1.8 million per year from 2016-2020 to finance foreign militaries and support maritime security and counterterrorism efforts. This year the two countries also signed an Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement to exchange common types of support, including food, fuel, transportation, ammunition, and equipment. The United States as one of the countries that has experienced terrorism attacks on September 11, 2001 at the World Trade Center Building which had huge material losses and casualties triggered the "War on Terror" policy to eliminate terrorism in this world.

The existence of this policy certainly makes the US want to help Nigeria in fighting the Boko Haram terrorism group in its country (Pais & Tombesi, 2021). One of the assistance that the US provides is by sending A-29 Super Tucano fighter aircraft that can be useful in surveillance, reconnaissance, and providing aerial attacks to Nigeria (Reuters, 2021).

Despite these cooperative efforts, significant challenges arose; the U.S. placed restrictions on certain military assistance due to concerns about human rights abuses committed by Nigerian forces such as the incident in 2014, where the U.S. withheld the sale of Cobra attack helicopters to Nigeria, citing reports of extrajudicial killings and abuses by Nigerian security forces (Manu, 2021). This decision strained relations, as the Nigerian government felt these restrictions limited its ability to effectively combat Boko Haram, however, the Leahy Law, a U.S. legal statute prohibiting assistance to foreign military units implicate in human rights abuses, underscored the American stance on human rights, creating a recurring obstacle in military cooperation (Dauda, 2021).

It is against this backdrop that this study aimed to investigate diplomatic defense policies and counter insurgency operations in North Eastern Nigeria.

Research Questions

i. How effective are the diplomatic defense policies in counter insurgency operations in North Eastern Nigeria?
ii. What are the challenges associated with diplomatic defense policies in counter insurgency operations in North Eastern Nigeria?

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to examine diplomatic defense policies in ensuring effectivecounter insurgency operations in North Eastern Nigeria. Whereas the specific objectives of the study are as follow:

i. To ascertain how effective are the diplomatic defense policies in counter insurgency operations in North Eastern Nigeria.
ii. To identify the challenges associated with diplomatic defense policies in counter insurgency operations in North Eastern Nigeria.

Diplomat

A diplomat is a Foreign Service officer appointed by a national government to conduct official negotiations and maintain political, economic, and social relations with other countries. Diplomats are highly tactful and skilled at handling delicate situations. Diplomats always attempt to promote affinity among states, implement foreign policy, and ameliorate culture by using shrewd diplomacy (Shaw, 2003).

Diplomats serve as leaders to understand the perspective and actions of foreigners and to advance strategies and tactics that will shape the behaviour of foreigners and foreign governments (Banerji, 1979). Diplomats promote peace, support advancement, conserve the citizens of the states, and assist in advancing the country's interests abroad. Diplomats also have the ability to implement foreign policy through various discussions, summits, and debates (Shulsinger 2017). Diplomats can interweave and enhance bilateral and multilateral relations and build a network of trusted partners (Tyler & Wyeth, 2023). Highly skilled and experienced diplomats can be a vital source of national power. The efficiency of diplomats enriches the country's posture and image around the world (Morgenthau, 1948).

A diplomat is a person appointed by a State or national government to conduct diplomatic activities with a foreign State or government, or with foreign entities such as international organizations. Diplomats are often public officers commissioned by the Government to supervise and conduct affairs in the name of the Government in foreign countries.

Diplomacy

Although diplomacy has been variously defined, scholars have argued that, no general definition of diplomacy can be very satisfactory or very revealing (Palmer and Perkins, 2004: 84). A charming characterization, though attacked to be vague and inadequate, is given by Ernest Satow (1966:1), who defines diplomacy as "the application of intelligence and tact to the conduct of official relations between the governments of independent states". This definition was criticized for obvious reasons – not all diplomats are either intelligent or tactful, yet they all take part in diplomacy (Ogunsanwo, 2007:1). McDermott (1973:37) sees diplomacy as "a science which permits its practitioners to say nothing and shelter behind mysterious nods of the head…, a science whose most successful exponent is he who can swim with his head above streams of events he pretends to conduct". Morgenthau, one of the leading exponents of realism (1978: 529), described diplomacy as "the technique for accommodating conflicts of interest, and the promotion of national interest by peaceful means." According to him, taken in its widest meaning, comprising the whole range of foreign policy, the task of diplomacy is fourfold:

First, diplomacy must determine its objectives in the light of the power actually and potentially available for the pursuit of these objectives. Second, diplomacy must assess

the objectives of other nations and the power actually and potentially available for the pursuit of these objectives. Third, diplomacy must determine to what extent these objectives are compatible with each other. Fourth, the diplomacy must employ the means suited to the pursuit of its objectives.

Defense Diplomacy

Defense diplomacy refer to the cooperative relationships between two or more countries in developing their defense capabilities (Montratama & Yani, 2017). This involves the exchange of technology, knowledge, and other resources to enhance collective security and achieve broader strategic goals. Such partnerships often entail formal agreements between governments and defense industries, as well as collaboration on research and development projects (Prayoga, 2020).Defense diplomacy has emerged as a crucial tool for nations seeking to bolster their defense capabilities and enhance their defense industries. Defense diplomacy refers to the use of diplomatic means to achieve strategic objectives related to national security and defense.

It involves the integration of defense and foreign policy to promote cooperation, build partnerships, and enhance defense capabilities (United Kingdom, 1998)Defense diplomacy is significant in shaping foreign and security policies, as it allows nations to leverage diplomatic channels to achieve defense-related objectives, such as technology transfer, capacity building, and international collaborations (Drab, 2018). This strategic approach to foreign policy and national security has gained significant attention in recent years, particularly among developing countries looking to strengthen their defense sectors.

Defense/Security

The basic responsibility of a nation's government involves defending and keeping its citizens safe at all times. And Thomas Hobbes submits, only the state has the wherewithal to guarantee defence, security and prevent the society from anarchy, through its government is deemed fit to have provided adequate security (Gaskin, 2016 as cited in Abiodun, Adedokun, Owoyemi & Kehinde, 2020). Pursuant to this, Abiodun et al (2020) agree that security usually remains a dynamic condition which encompasses the relative ability of a state to counter threats to its core values and interests. In the same vein, the security of a state is premised on two significant pillars which are: the maintenance and protection of the socio-economic order in the face of internal and external threat; and enhancement of a chosen international order that suppresses a threat to core values and interests, and also to the domestic order (McKaughan, 2016).

However, security and defence mean an all-encompassing situation indicating that a territory must be secured by a group of armed forces; and that the sovereignty of the

state must be adequately guaranteed by a democratic and patriotic government, which in turn should be protected by the military, police and the people themselves; and that the people must not only be protected from foreign attacks but also from bad implications of internal distress which includes: unemployment, hunger, starvation, diseases, ignorance, homelessness, environmental degradation and pollution (Achumba, Ighomercho, & AkporRobaro, 2013).

Defense Policy

Ogunedo (2011:29) clarified that Defence policy is accepted as the foundation upon which a nation's security is built. Adding "it is a plan of action adopted or pursued by a government to protect a country against potential enemies, harm or danger. It also-includes all strategies adopted for the preservation of a nation's sovereignty and her continued economic and socio-political values and development". The primary foundation of a nation's defence policy is derived from the concepts and policies of national security. In line with Nigeria's constitution, the internal security is maintained by the Police, Intelligence and para-military agencies while the military exclusively secures her territorial veracity and boundaries. Yet, when the internal security becomes too volatile the military is engaged; response to internal and external threats faced by a country is determined by the choices between the military and non-military options available, hence there is interwoven relationship between security and defence. Additionally, national security policy is the direct feeder of the national defence policy of a country. The Institute for National Strategic Studies (INSS) in the U.S rightly observed that "At the heart of a Defence White Paper is the government's concept of national security" (Nwolise, 2011).

Insurgency

The concept insurgency has been seen used differently in many literatures. However, the popular definition is one put forward by the United State as "the organized use of subversion and violence to seize, nullify, or challenge political control of a region." Moreover, from its legal point of view, an insurgency is seen as a violent protest carried out by rebels against a constituted authority or state that has been recognized by the (United Nations, n.d) cited in (Gana, 2023). Ibiang (2018) have given more characterization of insurgency as a battle that it is usually the product of asymmetric conflict, where one party has an overwhelming force and incontestable physical influence and other instruments of coercion over the other. Insurgency is the actions of an organized, often ideologically motivated group that seeks to effect or prevent political change of a governing authority within a region, and the actions focused on persuading or coercing

the population through the use of violence and subversion (North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), 2011).

In the same vein, the British Army Field Manual (AFM) defined insurgency as "the actions of a minority groupwithin a state that tend toward forcing political change by a means of a mixture of subversion, propaganda and military pressure, aiming to persuade or intimidate people to accept such a change" (cited in Liolio, 2013). For Metz & Millen (2004).

Effectiveness of Diplomatic Defense Policies in Counter Insurgency Operations

Ibekwe & Nosiri (2023) did a study titled counter terrorism: an assessment of Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) in combating Boko haram insurgency in the Lake Chad region. The documentary method as secondary source was adopted to gather data and content and logic reasoning were used for analysing the data. The regional security complex theory was adopted as framework for analysis. It was discovered that the MNJTF had helped to stifle the operations of Boko Haram insurgents within the region which is evident in the reported number of recaptured territories, downgrading of the terrorists' capability, freeing of abductees, facilitation of return of IDPs and refugees and facilitation of humanitarian assistance. However, it is faced with the challenge of further dismantling the grip of the insurgents in more locations in the region, as they keep changing their operational strategies to avoid detection by security operatives. Secondly, it was revealed that trust issue; challenge of finance, problem of effective collaboration and cooperation, human right challenge, poor border security, limited police capability and inadequate military equipment are some of the notable challenges to the effective operation of the MNJTF. The study recommended deepened collaboration, building or development of police capability or component, rejig of current border security strategies in place within the region, enhanced funding, adequate and sustainable training, elicit stronger support from international organizations, and intelligent gathering.

Faluyi (2017), an assessment of Nigeria's counter-terrorism policies against boko haram. The study adopted a qualitative approach founded on primary and secondary sources of data. The qualitative approach encompasses 'attributes, characteristics, or categories that describe an individual and cannot be quantified. The systems theory was used to explain factors that informed the adoption of government's counter-terrorism polices and why feedback is necessary whereas the state fragility theory was used to explain how the weakness of the Nigerian state aided the emergence of Boko Haram and has also affected Nigeria's counter-terrorism policies in mitigating the excesses of Boko Haram. Findings of the study unveiled that the achievements recorded in Nigeria's counter-terrorism campaign cannot be said to be total victory as more needs to be done. The Boko Haram issue is yet to be rooted out. Therefore, the sect still poses a major threat to the

Nigerian state and the Lake Chad Basin countries. Lapses such as dismal inter agency intelligence sharing; corruption and institutional dysfunctionalities were seen to be the cog in the wheel of effective counter-terrorism policy implementation in Nigeria. It was recommended among others that the emergency numbers in the event of disasters should be well centralised; the issue of different government agencies having different emergency numbers should be stopped.

Dauda (2021), the Impact of Foreign Defense Aid on the Fight Against Insurgency in Northern Nigeria. Qualitative methods are used in both data collection and data analysis. It makes use of secondary sources of data. Mostly books, journal articles, newspapers, and statistics from the global terrorism index. Also, reports from Transparency International, Amnesty International, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Ministry of Defense, and other related documents. Findings of the study revealed that Nigeria's absolute dependence on imported weapons to fight Boko Haram has intensified its strategic vulnerability to the whims and caprices of major arms industrial countries like the US and its allies. It was therefore recommended that, in the long run, it needs to establish domestic arms manufacturing industries, though it might cost billions of dollars, it is essential for the survival of the country.

Anzizi (2025), in his study the United States' role in counterinsurgency efforts in Nigeria: a critical analysis, the qualitative methodology was used. The study applied a constructivist approach to explore how norms, identities, and strategic interests have shaped U.S.-Nigeria cooperation on counterterrorism. The study findings unveiled that U.S.- Nigeria cooperation is shaped by a complex web of identities and interests, with the constructivist approach providing valuable insights but also revealing shortcomings. The U.S. has supported Nigeria through military aid, including equipment such as the A-29 Super Tucano, and special operations training, enhancing Nigeria's counterterrorism capabilities. Financial aid, such as the Financial Military Financing, has also played a role in strengthening Nigeria's defense framework. U.S. development aid addresses the root causes of insurgency by funding education, food aid, and markets in insurgency-affected regions. It was recommended among others that The U.S. should develop a more integrated counterterrorism strategy that combines military assistance with extensive development programs aimed at addressing poverty, unemployment, and education deficits in Nigeria, and as such, an approach should prioritize initiatives that empower local communities and promote resilience against extremist ideologies.

Challenges Associated with Diplomatic Defense Policies in Counter Insurgency Operations.

Olufade, Ibrahim, Baban'umma, and Abdul (2023), challenges of diplomacy in securing external defense arrangement in Nigeria (2007-2022). The study adopted mixed research

design using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The study relied heavily on secondary sources such as books, journals, articles, periodical, government reports and publications, magazines, unpublished manuscript, and conference papers; also, on primary sources such as interviews and questionnaires. It was found out that a lot still need to be done to improve the strategies and methods of securing diplomatic arrangements in a way that will favor Nigeria in dealing with the challenges encountered in diplomatic defense relations to combat the effect of terrorism both locally and regionally. The study recommended that Nigeria must intensify efforts at holding regional security summits for defense diplomats while intensifying joint military exercises for regional states in the Multi-national Joint Task Force to promote unity, improve communication and information sharing; and that the state must improve defense budgeting while joining multiple counter terrorism coalition both regionally and globally.
Gana, Ku Samsu, and Bin Ismail (2023), carried out a study on counterinsurgency responses in Nigeria: unveiling the constraining challenges. The study utilised secondary materials for its data. The material used includes but not limited to journals, past research works, newspaper articles and magazines and reports by national and international organisations such as United Nations High Commission on Refugees among others. Findings of the study revealed that the analysis of the various counterinsurgency responses show an excessive force used by the military in containing the insurgency hinders the successes of the measures. To remedy, the study hence recommended for redesigning of counterinsurgency tactic to focus on winning the hearts and minds of the local population. This can be done through relaxing some of the stringent COIN policies such as closure of markets, imposition of extended curfew hours, and restrictions of vehicle movements. The government can also take the realm of governance to the local population through provision of basic social services to ameliorate the hardships induces by the war.
Okoko, Peter and Ekpo (2023), counter-insurgency in Nigeria, efforts and inhibitors: the Boko haram example, 2000-2020. The study relied on primary documents and commentaries. Secondary sources served complementary purposes. It was found out that the failures were caused by poor inter-agency cooperation and coordination; poor culture of inter-agency intelligence information management; poor civil-military relations and lack of respect for human rights which the terrorists often capitalized on. There were also funding constraints in Defense budgetary processes and allocations; arms procurement underpinned by unbridled corruption; rise of splinter and newer sects, such as ISWAP; and poor integrated management approach to combating terrorism were all contributory to failures in the war against insurgency. The study recommended among others that since the counter-terrorism efforts in Nigeria are definitely not successful so far, more needs to be done to improve the efficiency and effectiveness.

Arzika (2023), issues and challenges in Nigeria- Niger republic border security. Qualitative method was employed for this study. The study employed reactive re-active model approach as a variant of linkage theory as a tool in understanding the study. The article argued that amongst the various challenges to border security and social stability along the border, corruption, insecurity, porous nature of the border and uncontrollable movement of people are responsible. The study recommended among others the need for an allied of bilateral arrangement of customs and immigration to enforce minimum standards at international travel. Government of the two countries should provide employment opportunities to the unemployed youths in the region in order to dissuade them from being indoctrinated in various crimes and terrorism. The study probed into the issues and challenges of Nigeria-Niger border security but failed to incorporate how such challenges affected the counter insurgency operations in North Eastern Nigeria which this study intends to address.

Theoretical Framework: (Counter-Insurgency Theory)

This framework was propounded by French Officer called David Galula. This theory or framework believes that to achieve counter insurgency there is need for combination of military, political and social actions under strong control of a single authority (CounterInsurgency, 2018). It also holds that "the development and success of counter-insurgency campaign should be hinged on the heart of the "political machine" which needs political programmes targeted at pacifying the insurgent's base. The counter-3insurgents should also effectively coordinate efforts at such programmes as this is a major requirement.

This coordination can be achieved through committees and integrated military-civilian hierarchies" (Itumo & Nwobashi, 2015, p.11) cited in (Uzoma & Emmanuel, 2021). The central message of this framework is on the development of political machine in order to win the support of the people or population and once the state wins popular support, the insurgency operations will be defeated. According to Galula a victory (in a counterinsurgency) is not the destruction in a given area of the insurgent's forces and his political organization. A victory is that plus the permanent isolation of the insurgent from the population, isolation not enforced upon the population, but maintained by and with the population. In conventional warfare, strength is assessed according to military or other tangible criteria, such as the number of divisions, the position they hold, the industrial resources, etc. In revolutionary warfare, strength must be assessed by the extent of support from the population as measured in terms of political organization at the grass roots. The counterinsurgent reaches a position of strength when his power is embedded in a political organization issuing from, and firmly supported by, the population (cited in CounterInsurgency, 2018).

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Counterinsurgency theory, on the other hand, focuses on the comprehensive approach to defeating insurgencies by addressing the root causes of conflict, winning the support of the local population, and degrading the capabilities of insurgent groups. In the case of North Eastern Nigeria, the insurgency has been fueled by factors such as poverty, marginalization, and lack of governance. By applying counterinsurgency strategies that emphasize community engagement, development programs, and efforts to address grievances, Nigerian defense industry can undermine the appeal of extremist ideologies and reduce the support base of insurgent groups.

Furthermore, the cooperation between Nigeria and other nations in counterinsurgency operations is crucial for achieving success in their efforts to combat terrorism in the region. By coordinating military campaigns, sharing intelligence, conducting joint operations, and securing their common border, both countries can improve their effectiveness in disrupting insurgent activities, degrading their capabilities, and ultimately defeating the insurgency.

Methodology

This study is a mixed research design and data were generated from their natural setting. The study examine Diplomatic Defense policy and Counter Insurgency Operations in North Eastern Nigeria, 2015-2024. For this study, a total population of 11,535 was adopted as the study population, thus the target population are as follow: Representatives of the U.S embassy Abuja, the Embassy of the Republic of Chad, Nigerien embassy, The Cameroonian Embassy, Nigeria Ministry of Defense Abuja, Office of the National Security Adviser, Nigerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Abuja, and Multinational Joint task Force as seen in Table 1, below, who are experienced and have got dependable information on this subject matter.

Table 1: The Population of the Study

S/N	Selected Organization	Population of Staff in the Organization	Number of questionnaire to be allocated
1	Embassy of Niger	18	1
2	Embassy of Chad	15	1
3	Embassy of Cameroon	12	0
4	Nigeria Ministry of Defense Abuja	620	19.9
5	Office of the National Security Adviser	1100	35.3
6	Nigerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Abuja	870	27.9
7	Multinational Joint task Force	8,900	285.4
	Total	**11,535**	**370**

Source: Field Survey, May, 2025

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The researcher broke down the study population into 7 strata as shown above and will produced 370 questionnaires out of which 1 each will administered to the embassies of Niger and Chad as contained in the first three strata respectively. While, 20 questionnaires will be administered to the Nigeria Ministry of Defense Abuja; 28 questionnaires will go to the Office of the National Security Adviser (NSA) Abuja and 35 to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Whereas the remaining 285 of the questionnaires were administered to the office of the Multinational Joint task Force (Sector 1, 2, 3 & 4) through the Nigerian Army headquarters Abuja. The questionnaires will include only structured questions.

The researcher conducted a pre-survey visit to the organizations listed; this enabled the researcher to gather estimates of number of staff at the units or department directly dealing with the subject of this research work. The reason for this cross section is that the institutions are not only key bodies when it comes to the topic of study, but they also provide useful insight on the Subject.

Therefore the total population to be considered in this research work is 11,535 staff of the above mentioned institutions. The reason for this cross section is that the institutions are not only key bodies when it comes to the topic of study but that they can provide useful insight on the subject matter. The importance of sampling is to reduce the population under study to a manageable size and to meet up with the stipulated research period. In this study the sample was drawn to cover views of the study population of 11,535.

However, in selecting the sample size, the study utilized the determination formula in social sciences propounded by Krejecie and Morgan (1970). In the study, the non-probability or purposive and stratified sampling technique were adopted. Purposive sampling according to Ajay & Micah (2014) is a sampling technique that helps the researcher to use his or her discretion and judgement in identifying the population to be studied. It is based on the conviction that the population that the researcher identified would give the accurate data that were used for this research.

Also, the stratified sampling technique was used since the research population is made up of different characteristics in terms of sex, race, age, marital state and department. This type of sampling technique is considered appropriate for this study due to the huge number of research population and the need to have a representative figure that can be effectively managed (Ajay & Micah, 2014). Moreover, stratified technique helps better data analysis and enables the researcher to be more thorough in handling the groups represented in the population distribution.

The study data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. For the purpose of the research, questionnaire method were used as the primary instruments of data collection. The questionnaire to be used for this research work has multiple options for the questions where respondents will be provided with option of answers to choose only the right answer to their desires. This form of research plan will be chosen in order to ease

the work of the researcher in the area of classifying and analyzing individuals (respondents) options.

The Researcher used the close ended questionnaire for this investigation, adopting the 5 point Likert scale which made provision for respondents to tick Strongly Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagreed, Disagreed and Indifferent/Undecided. This type of questionnaires is more effective for studies like this one. The questionnaire was preferred because of its general simplicity and has a wider reach of the respondents. It provides a standard form of responses for the generality of the target respondents which also makes it easy for analysis. For the purpose of this research the questionnaires were administered personally and through the help of research assistants. The questionnaire were divided into two parts. The first part contains the bio-data of the respondents and the second aspect consists of research questions designed to elicit information from respondents on the subject of the research. About 370 copies were produced and distributed after which the filled copied were retrieved for analysis. The questionnaire were administered by the researcher only in such a way that fairness and justice were given due consideration.

The data collected were presented, analyzed, and interpreted through the use of frequency distribution tables and simple percentage. This would be necessary in order to give vivid description of all relevant variables in the survey conducted. The preference for this method will be due to the pattern in which the questionnaires were framed such that nominal data can be easily converted into percentages. It equally made it possible for the researcher to compare views, perceptions, and opinions of the different categories involved in the research.

The formula for calculating simple percentage is given below:

Simple Percentage = Number of respondents X 100
Total Number of respondents

Effectiveness of Diplomatic Defense Policies in Counter Insurgency Operations in North Eastern Nigeria 2010 – 2024

Table 2: Respondents opinion on the Impact Diplomatic Defense Policies

S/N	Extent of Impact.	Frequency	Percentage
	Very Significant.	**78**	**21**
	Significant.	**75**	**20**
	Less Significant	**113**	**30.5**
	Not Significant	**104**	**28**
	Undecided	**0**	**0**
	Total	**370**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, October, (2025)

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The table 2 above showed that 78 respondents representing 21% were of the opinion that the Extent of which the diplomatic strategies used by Nigeria (such as negotiation, persuasion, inducement and building coalitions) impacts on external defense arrangements for Nigeria to combat terrorism was very significant.

Similarly, 75 respondents representing 20% of the overall responses were of the view that the extent of which the diplomatic strategies used by Nigeria impacts on external defense arrangements for Nigeria to combat terrorism was significant, whereas, 113 respondents representing 30.5% argued that the extent of which diplomatic strategies used by Nigeria impacts on external defense arrangements for Nigeria to combat terrorism was less significant. Nevertheless, 104 respondents (28%) of the entire population believe that the diplomatic strategies used by Nigeria had no impacts at all on external defense arrangements for Nigeria to combat terrorism. After considering the entire responses, the researcher observed that approximately 41% of the respondents held positive opinions on how diplomatic strategies used impacts on combating terrorism through the MNJTF. The remaining 59%, who happen to be the majority, held unto the negative views that either the diplomatic strategies used impacts to a limited level on the fight against terrorism or had no impacts at all. There was only a 4.8% gap between these responses- representing a difference of 18 respondents, to this end- diplomatic strategies going by this analysis suggest a relative impact on the fight against insecurity and terrorism in Nigeria. This opens a room for improvements to be made on the role that the Ministry of defense and the office of the National Security Adviser responsible for defense and security play in securing external defense arrangements.

The implication of this is that cumulatively, majority of the respondents opined that the Nigeria's external defense arrangements has less significant impact on the nation's national security.

Table 3: Resapondenta opinion on the Challenges Associated with Diplomatic Defense Policies in Counter Insurgency Operations in North Eastern, Nigeria.

S/N	Responses on Challenges	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strong Disagree	Undecided	Total
1	Excessive reliance on hard power diplomacy to address security threats than internally addressing the root causes of security threats has become a problem to the diplomatic strategy of securing external defense arrangement	89 (24%)	163 (44%)	55 (14.8%)	63 (17%)	0	370 100%
2	Weak diplomatic Cooperation to trace and clamp downon terrorist financing networks and communication system	104 (28%)	207 (55.9%)	50 (13.5%)	9 (2%)	0 0	370 100%
3	The lack of willingnesson the part of Lake Chad Basin group of States to jointly solve the problem of terrorism	110 (29.7%)	143 (38.6%)	100 (27%)	17 (4.5%)	0 0	370 100%

S/N	Responses on Challenges	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strong Disagree	Undecided	Total
4	The lack of 'trust' in each member state that makes up the MNJTF	127 (34%)	149 (40%)	84 (22.7%)	10 (2.7%)	0 0	370 100%
5	Human right abuses on the part of Nigerian soldiers and the U.S Leahy Law vetting process led to weak defense assistance and covert blocking of assistance to Nigeria from regional allies	113 (30.5%)	206 (55.6%)	50 (13.5%)	1 (0.27%)	0 0	370 100%

Source: Field Survey, October, (2025)

Table 3, above reveals that 89 (24%) strongly agreed and 163 (44%) agreed to the assertion that excessive reliance on hard power diplomacy to address security threats than internally addressing the root causes of security threats has become a problem to the diplomatic strategy of securing external defense arrangement. This represents the response of the majority of the sampled respondents of about 68% and therefore, it could be established that there is need to address policy challenge particularly in this area that will result in addressing the root causes of insecurity internally. The minority view stood at only 32%.

In the same vein, majority of the respondents about 83.9% argued that weak diplomatic Cooperation to trace and clamp down on terrorist financing networks and communication system due to interested state parties is a challenge affecting the use of diplomatic strategies to secure external defense arrangements as against only 16% who were opposed to this view.

Similarly, about 68.3% of respondents argue that the lack of willingness on the part of the Lake Chad Basin group of States to jointly solve the problem of terrorism is a major hindrance to diplomatic strategy of resolving the terrorism question around Nigeria, whereas only 31.7% respondents held the minority view on this question.

Finally, about 86.1% of respondents argue that the issue of Human right abuses on the part of Nigerian soldiers and the U.S Leahy Law vetting process led to weak defense assistance and covert blocking of assistance to Nigeria from global/regional allies, whereas only 13.9% respondents held the minority view on this question. The broad analysis of these issues reveals the challenges that have overtime hampered extensive use of diplomatic strategic measures directly by state envoys or through external arrangements like the Multinational Joint Task Force at resolving the regional defense/security threats in and around Nigeria.

Although diplomacy has been used in the conduct of foreign policies in Africa, however, a disconcerting trend in the practice of diplomacy in Africa is the often limited successes, and sometimes failures, of states and regional organizations in achieving foreign policy objectives- such as Nigeria's desire to end the intractable Boko Haram terrorism even

when it has diplomatically committed itself to the multinational Joint Task Force and other multilateral strategies. Remarkably, such failures are not only typical of diplomacy targeting external actors like the U.S particularly when it failed to supply Nigeria with the need hard-wares to forcefully combat the Boko Haram on excuse of human right abuses, but such failures are equally visible in intra-African diplomacy having to do with neighboring states who are most times allies of the U.S and France.

Following the withdrawals after series of attacks, it was clear not all the countries in the MTNJF really had the will and means to be committed to the fight as Baga became deserted as residents fled to neighbouring towns and bushes, leaving behind dozens of corpses littering the streets of Baga after the attack which was described as the most deadly against the MNJTF.

In fact, coordination has until now been more of an exception than the rule. The MNJTF's actions also depend on the political will of the LCBC leaders, which is still lacking in many instances and which prevents it from achieving its potential. Until now the MNJTF has suffered somewhat from the fact that certain members of the coalition prefer national or bilateral actions. This is a constraint that it may continue to face in the future. Niger's request for bilateral assistance from Chad after the attack on Bosso is a case in point.

Summary of Findings

i. The study findings revealed that the diplomatic strategies used in securing external defense arrangements were desirable but less impactful due to not only external problem of trust but due to failure to internally address the root causes of terrorism in states.

ii. It was established that multiple challenges like weak diplomatic Cooperation, lack of 'trust' in each member state that makes up the MNJTF and Human right abuses on the part of Nigerian soldiers to be the front line challenges affecting the strategies adopted to secure support for the counter terrorism arrangement

Conclusion

Since independence, Nigeria have been involved in diplomatic balancing and rebalancing of negotiations with countries of the world, sometimes requiring persuasion and inducement strategies to secure defense support from neighboring states through the arrangement of the Multinational Joint Task Force. At other times, Nigeria have used thesummitry approach to deepen opportunities to joint U.S led defense coalitions and signed defense MoUs with the likes of China, UK and Turkey. Typically, hard and soft diplomacy has been one of the few tools used in the conduct of Nigerian defense policy aside direct use of military force over the years; however a disconcerting trend in this practice is often the limited successes, and sometimes failures of states or regional

organizations from achieving their defense policy objectives. Nigeria has in spite of her diplomatic posturing still lack steam in the quest to fulfill her desire to end the intractable Boko Haram terrorism even when it has diplomatically committed itself to regional stabilization and other multilateral strategies to boost defense arrangements. Remarkably, setbacks such as lack of trust, human right abuse issues, lack of state assertiveness and lack of defense funding as well as failure to internally address the root causes of terrorism are not only typical of the diplomatic challenge targeting external support from actors like the U.S alone, but such setbacks are equally visible in intra-African defense diplomacy practice having to do with neighboring states who are most times allies of the U.S and France. By and large the diplomatic skills of Africa and indeed Nigeria are tested mostly during periods of conflicts and threats to regional security.

The study made some recommendations to improve the situation around the challenges militating against the successes of Nigeria's strategic diplomacy to secure defense support for counter terrorism arrangements.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are made.

i. The Nigerian state must intentionally be seen to be addressing poverty, unemployment and porous borders which were among the key root causes of the domestic terrorism in Nigeria that has spiraled out of control into a regional issue, in order for the diplomatic strategies used to remain impactful.

ii. Nigeria must intensify efforts at holding regional security summits for defense diplomats while intensifying joint military exercises for regional states in the Multi-national Joint Task Force to promote unity, improve communication and information sharing.

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